

The ‘Aqīdah of al-Dāraqūṭnī (306–385)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

A topic of dispute which has recently been in discussion online concerns the true creed of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar al-Dāraqūṭnī al-Shāfi‘ī (d. 385); was he *Ash‘arī* or *Atharī* inclined? Those who contend that he agreed with the *Ashā‘irah* often cite the following incident involving al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dāraqūṭnī and his student, Abū Dharr al-Harawī (d. 434), wherein the former praises the *Ash‘arī* scholar Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 403):

وقال أبو الوليد الباجي في كتاب «اختصار فرق الفقهاء» [...] لقد أخبرني أبو ذر، وكان يميل إلى مذهبه، فسألته: من أين لك هذا؟ فقال: كنت ماشيا ببغداد مع الدارقطني فلقينا القاضي أبا بكر، فالتزمه الشيخ أبو الحسن الدارقطني، وقبل وجهه وعينه. فلما فارقتاه قلت: من هذا؟ فقال: هذا إمام المسلمين والذاب عن الدين القاضي أبو بكر محمد بن الطيب. قال أبو ذر: فمن ذلك الوقت تكررت عليه.

Abū al-Walīd al-Bājī [d. 474] said in the book *Ikhtisār firaq al-Fuqahā’*: I was informed by Abū Dharr [al-Harawī], who used to incline towards his [i.e. al-Bāqillānī’s] creed, [when] I asked him, “For which reason have you done this?” So [Abū Dharr al-Harawī] replied, “I was walking in *Baghdād* with al-Dāraqūṭnī when we were met with al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr [al-Bāqillānī], so he [al-Dāraqūṭnī] embraced him and kissed his face and [between] his two eyes. When we had departed from him, I asked him, “Who is this?” So [al-Dāraqūṭnī] said, ‘This is the leader of the Muslims and the defender of the religion: al-Qāḍī Abu Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ṭayyib.’” Abū Dharr said, “From that moment, I began to frequently go to him.”¹

Firstly, a scholar praising another doesn’t entail the former’s acceptance of the latter’s creed. Ibn Daqīq al-‘Īd (d. 702)² and Ibn Ḥajar (d. 852)³ both gave substantial praise for Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728), but this obviously does not mean they agreed with his ‘aqīdah!

¹ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 29, p. 406. I do not believe there is any convincing reason for rejecting this report, as it is corroborated by what is narrated by Ibn ‘Asākir in his *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 37, p. 392.

² Ibn Nāṣir al-Dimashqī, *al-Radd al-Wāfir*, p. 59

³ *Taqrīẓ li-l-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī ‘alā-l-Radd al-Wāfir*, p. 12

Secondly, al-Bāqillānī was known in his time for debating and refuting the Christians, and it is likely that this is the reason *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī praised him. This is indicated by him describing al-Bāqillānī as being a “leader of the Muslims” and “defender of the religion” as this is a clear reference to Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī’s defence of Islām against the emperor of Rome and on other occasions as well, refuting the objections raised by Christians⁴ & other groups. This is not the same as, for instance, describing al-Bāqillānī as being “the *Imām* of Ahl al-Sunnah.” Such a description would imply acceptance of his creed, whereas al-Dāraquṭnī had praised him in terms that do not imply this.

It is true that in another wording of this encounter, al-Dāraquṭnī praised al-Bāqillānī by saying, “This is the sword of the Sunnah: Abu Bakr [al-Bāqillānī], the *Ash‘arī*,”⁵ and this does admittedly indicate acceptance of his ‘*aqīdah*. However, because the *isnād* of this strange wording is questionable and includes unnamed narrators, precedence is to be given to the account cited earlier recorded directly by Abū al-Walīd al-Bājī in his book.

Thirdly, can we actually confirm that *Imām* Abū al-Ḥasan al-Dāraquṭnī was even aware of the ‘*aqīdah* held by al-Bāqillānī? There is reason to question this, since we have the work of *Imām* Abū Naṣr al-Sijzī (d. 444) wherein he described al-Bāqillānī as hiding his ‘*aqīdah* and praising *Imām* Aḥmad alongside other adherents to *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*.⁶ *Imām* al-Dhahabī also described al-Bāqillānī as defending the methodology of *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* and the *Ḥanābilah*, despite him (inwardly) also opposing them in some matters.⁷

In other words, al-Bāqillānī seems to have been uninterested in making his *kalāmī* creed known. It is the debates he had with the Christians which the masses knew; the *Khalīfah* of ‘*Irāq* had sent him to Constantinople for that purpose! Common knowledge about al-Bāqillānī at the time particularly concerned his opposition to the *kuffār* and deviant sects, since he outwardly displayed to the general public no more than this.

The reason *al-Ḥāfiẓ* al-Dāraquṭnī praised Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī would therefore only be due to these positive efforts that were well known about him, not because al-Dāraquṭnī agreed with the specifics of al-Bāqillānī’s ‘*aqīdah*. This was stated by al-Dhahabī.⁸

⁴ Relevant words are found in *al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ’s Tartīb al-Madārik*, vol. 7, p. 57 onwards.

⁵ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 37, p. 392

⁶ Abū Naṣr al-Sijzī, *al-Radd ‘alā man ankar al-Ḥarf wa-l-Ṣawt*, pp. 305–306

⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 17, p. 558

⁸ Ibid.

Al-Qāḍī al-Bāqillānī's inward beliefs and deep involvement with *‘ilm al-kalām* was very likely not known except to those people who discussed or sat with him. We have no reason to believe *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* was from these few people, and to the contrary, we have reason to believe the opposite.

قال الحافظ أبو عبد الرحمن السلمي في السؤالات: وسمعت الشيخ أبا الحسن يقول: ما في الدنيا شيء أبغض إلي من الكلام.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412) reported in *al-Su’ālāt*, “I heard *al-Shaykh* Abū al-Ḥasan [al-Dāraquṭnī] say, ‘Nothing is more hateful to me than *kalām* [theological rhetoric].’”⁹

On the one hand *al-Dāraquṭnī* detested *kalām*, whereas on the other hand one cannot deny that *al-Bāqillānī* was a very learned *mutakallim*!¹⁰ Although we may differ on what “*kalām*” means,¹¹ it is safe to say no real *Ash‘arī* would utter *al-Dāraquṭnī*’s words here.

Fourthly, we find that *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* had also praised the strict *Atharī* scholars; he viewed Abū Bakr ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311), for example, as being a firm *Imām*.¹² There is also one other mention in this regard occurring in *Su’ālāt al-Sulamī*:

قال الحافظ أبو عبد الرحمن السلمي في السؤالات: وسألته عن الأزهرى؟ فقال: هو أحمد بن محمد بن الأزهر بن حريث، وهو سيجستاني، منكر الحديث، إلا أنه بلغني أن محمد بن إسحاق بن خزيمة حسن الرأي فيه، وكفى بهذا نفرا!

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī said in *al-Su’ālāt*, “And I asked him regarding *al-Azharī*, so he [i.e. *al-Dāraquṭnī*] answered, ‘He is Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Azhar b. Ḥurayth, and he was *Sijistānī*. [He is] rejected in *ḥadīth*, but it has reached me that Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Khuzaymah had a good opinion of him, and that is sufficient for him as pride!’”¹³

⁹ *Su’ālāt al-Sulamī*, p. 357, and *Imām al-Dhahabī* authenticated it in *al-Siyar*, vol. 17, p. 457.

¹⁰ To stress this point (although I probably don’t need to), *al-Ṣaffādī* (d. 764) states in *al-Wāfi*, vol. 3, p. 47, “Abu Bakr al-Bāqillānī al-Baṣrī: [he was] the author of multiple works pertaining to *‘ilm al-kalām*.”

¹¹ But as a side point, *al-Ḥāfiẓ* Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (*al-Dāraquṭnī*’s student) was known to have cursed *Ahl al-Kalām* such as the *Kullābiyyah*. *Al-Harawī*, *Dhamm al-Kalām*, vol. 4, p. 409.

¹² *Su’ālāt al-Sulamī*, p. 101

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 128

Thus, it is clear that al-Dāraquṭnī was very fond of Ibn Khuzaymah, the adherence of whom to *Athariyyah* is indisputable.¹⁴ If one were to use this to argue al-Dāraquṭnī was *Atharī* rather than *Ashʿarī*, however, an *Ashʿarī* would surely object, “But his praise for Ibn Khuzaymah is not in *ʿaqidah*, it’s merely in terms of being a *muḥaddith*!” This would necessitate that he can no longer cling onto the “Bāqillānī praise” argument without maintaining a double standard; it is simply just as (if not considerably more) plausible that al-Dāraquṭnī’s praise for al-Bāqillānī was likewise unrelated to his *ʿaqidah*.

Fifthly, one other scholar we can take into consideration when addressing this issue is Abū al-Faḍl al-Tamīmī (d. 410), whose situation resembles that of al-Dāraquṭnī.

Abū al-Faḍl al-Tamīmī was al-Bāqillānī’s companion¹⁵ while simultaneously not only affirming that Allāh speaks with letter (*ḥarf*) and sound (*ṣawt*), but he even stated none of the scholars ever held that the words of the Qurʾān are a created expression.¹⁶ He declared this view to be a misguided innovation, despite the fact that it is precisely what al-Bāqillānī (his companion) had believed!¹⁷ This further bolsters the point at hand: If al-Tamīmī’s friendship with al-Bāqillānī did not entail an agreement in creed between the two, it is even less likely to be the case between him and al-Dāraquṭnī.

Ultimately, we cannot definitively determine whether *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī agreed with the *Ashʿarīrah* without proof that transcends merely appealing to his praise for certain scholars or pointing out that some of his students were from the *mutakallimīn*. The real question is: What did al-Dāraquṭnī *himself* say with respect to *ʿaqidah*?

The creedal works which were authored by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dāraquṭnī include *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*, and *Kitāb al-Ruʾyah*. Many attempt now to cast doubt upon these books for being narrated via Abū al-ʿIzz ibn Kādish (d. 526)¹⁸ because he was said to have been confounded when narrating and was accused of lying by Ibn al-Najjār!¹⁹ This accusation is misplaced, however, as Ibn Kādish repented from fabricating.²⁰ Ibn Nāṣir’s negative

¹⁴ The evidence for this is simply *Imām* Ibn Khuzaymah’s *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* (and the frequent claim that Ibn Khuzaymah repented from this book is a ridiculous belief which nobody has held until recently).

¹⁵ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 13, p. 58

¹⁶ Abū al-Faḍl al-Tamīmī, *Iʿtiqād al-Imām al-Munabbal*, pp. 33, 36

¹⁷ This is proven by what al-Bāqillānī says in his works, such as *al-Inṣāf*, ed. al-Azhariyyah, p. 92.

¹⁸ He transmitted both *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt* and *Kitāb al-Ruʾyah* from al-ʿUshārī, from al-Dāraquṭnī.

¹⁹ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 19, p. 559

²⁰ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 1, p. 218

opinion of Ibn Kādish was also presumably based largely on his fabrications,²¹ but (as aforementioned) he eventually repented in any case. Also, al-Ḥafīẓ Ibn ‘Asākir upheld Ibn Kādish’s reliability in response to one of Ibn Nāṣir’s statements.²²

The only other criticism against Ibn Kādish we know of was that he was accused by ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Anmāṭī for *takhlīṭ* (mixing up).²³ However, it is known that in respect to transmitting books from their authors, memory and precision in narration is not an issue (all that is required is to be able to read the book, not to memorise it).²⁴

With that being said, Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597) had words of praise for Abū al-‘Izz ibn Kādish, and likewise did Ibn al-Kashāb (d. 567).²⁵ Further, Al-Ḥafīẓ ibn ‘Asākir (d. 571) defended Ibn Kādish and said that his transmission is authentic in *samā‘āt* (i.e. public gatherings of a book’s reading),²⁶ with Ibn al-Sam‘ānī (d. 562) also speaking to this effect.²⁷ Since Ibn Kādish’s transmission of *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī’s books would take place in *samā‘āt* (with Ibn ‘Asākir himself transmitting creedal works of al-Dāraquṭnī via Ibn Kādish),²⁸ there remains no convincing reason to doubt the authenticity of these books.

Moreover, we find that Ibn Kādish was not alone in his transmission. *Kitāb al-Nuzūl* was transmitted not only by Ibn Kādish, but it was also reported via another chain.²⁹ Likewise, Ibn Kādish was corroborated in regards to al-Dāraquṭnī’s *Kitāb al-Ru‘yah*³⁰ and also his *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*.³¹ Furthermore, the *shuyūkh* which al-Dāraquṭnī narrated from in these three books can be confirmed to be his teachers, and the *mutūn* (texts) of the *aḥādīth* in al-Dāraquṭnī’s creedal works correspond to their *mutūn* found in other books.³²

²¹ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 36, p. 142

²² Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 19, p. 559

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Related details are found in Shaykh Nāsir Āl Mut‘ib’s work, *Daf‘ al-Shukūk wa-l-Awhām*, p. 15 onwards.

²⁵ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 36, p. 142

²⁶ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 19, p. 559

²⁷ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 36, p. 142

²⁸ More details regarding Ibn Kādish’s book transmission are cited by Ibn Ḥajar in *al-Lisān*, vol. 1, p. 218.

²⁹ This other chain was used by al-Faqīhī in his *taḥqīq* of *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*.

³⁰ This was demonstrated in *taḥqīq* of the 1411 A.H. (1990 C.E.) print of *Kitāb al-Ru‘yah*, pp. 86–87.

³¹ A captivating overview in this regard is found [here](#).

³² There is still the claim that Abū Ṭalīb al-‘Ushārī (who Ibn Kādish transmitted from) himself was also weak, but the little criticism about his mistakes hold no weight in regards to the transmission of a book. The scholars who praised and authenticated him are a multitude, and a detailed defence of al-‘Ushārī’s

Once the authenticity of these three works are proven, we can take into consideration the fact that their portray *Imām al-Daraqūṭnī* as an uncompromising *Atharī* on the topic of *al-Asmā' wa-l-Ṣifāt* (the names and attributes of Allāh).

From his *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, we find that *Imām al-Daraqūṭnī* affirmed attributes including the two Feet (*al-Qadamayn*), Hand (*al-Yad*), Fingers (*al-Aṣābi'*), Face (*al-Wajh*), and laughter (*al-ḍahik*) among other *khbarī Ṣifāt*.³³ This, however, will not be entirely sufficient, as it could easily be claimed that *al-Dāraqūṭnī* was upon *tafwīḍ al-ma'nā* and that his mere narration of these *aḥādīth* does not demonstrate otherwise.

Those who claim that *al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dāraqūṭnī* was a *mufawwiḍ* of the meanings of the *Ṣifāt* would likely appeal to him narrating from *Wakī' b. al-Jarrāḥ* (d. 196):

حدثنا محمد بن مخلد، ثنا العباس بن محمد الدوري، قال: سمعت يحيى بن معين يقول:
شهدت زكرياء بن عدي يسأل، وكيف؟ فقال: يا أبا سفيان إن هذه الأحاديث يعني مثل
الكرسي موضع القدمين، ونحو هذا. فقال وكيع: أدركنا إسماعيل بن أبي خالد، وسفيان
ومسعرًا يحدثون بهذه الأحاديث ولا يفسرون شيئاً.

Regarding the *aḥādīth* pertaining to the *Ṣifāt*, such as the *Kursī* being the place of the two Feet (*al-Qadamayn*), *Wakī' ibn al-Jarrāḥ* said, “We encountered *Ismā'īl ibn Abī Khālid* and *Sufyān [al-Thawrī]* and *Mis'ar* narrating these *aḥādīth*, and they did not explain anything.”³⁴

The claim here is that “and they did not explain anything” is a reference to them not explaining the meanings of the *Ṣifāt*. This understanding, however, is rebutted by the context, since *Wakī' b. al-Jarrāḥ* (if we refer to the full Arabic version above) only said this in response to being asked “How?” Hence, “they did not explain anything” refers only to not explaining the howness, not that they did *tafwīḍ* of the *ma'nā*. What further supports this is the fact that before he narrated this from *Wakī'*, *Imām al-Daraqūṭnī* mentioned *al-Qāsim ibn Sallām* (d. 224) saying, “When it is asked, ‘How does Allāh place His Foot? How does Allāh laugh?’ Then we reply, ‘That [i.e. the howness] is not to be

reliability in narration (although not necessary for transmitting a book) is found [here](#), pp. 26–27. Note that *Imām al-Ushārī* was also corroborated on multiple occasions regarding these books.

³³ This is seen throughout his *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, ed. al-Faqīhī, pp. 25–65.

³⁴ *Al-Dāraqūṭnī, Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, p. 69

explained, and we have not heard anyone explain this.”³⁵ It is clear based on this that when *al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dāraquṭnī* alluded to the prohibition of explaining the *Ṣifāt*, this is only prohibition of explaining the howness (*kayf*), not of explaining the meaning (*maʿnā*).

What demonstrates that *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* was in fact upon *ithbāt* rather than *tafwīd* is what *Imām Abū al-Qāsim al-Lālakāʾī* (d. 418) reported in *al-Sunnah*:

وجدت بخط أبي الحسن الدارقطني رحمه الله، عن إسحاق المهادي، قال: سمعت أبا العباس
ثعلباً يقول: [...] ﴿استوى على العرش﴾: علا.

I saw [this report] in the writing of *Abū al-Ḥasan al-Dāraquṭnī*, may Allāh have mercy on him: from *Ishāq al-Kādhī*, who said: I heard *Abū al-ʿAbbās Thaʿlab* say, “‘He *istawā* above the Throne’ [7:54], He ascended [*ʿalā*].”³⁶

This denotes that similar to *al-Lālakāʾī*, *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* also understood *al-istiwaʾ* to mean that Allāh ascended (*ʿalā*) above the Throne, thus demonstrating that he was not a *mufawwiḍ*. *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī* also narrated:

حدثنا محمد بن مخلد، ثنا محمد بن محمد بن عمر بن الحكم أبو الحسن ابن العطار، قال: سمعت
محمد بن مصعب العابد يقول: من زعم أنك لا تتكلم ولا ترى في الآخرة، فهو كافر بوجهك
ولا يعرفك، أشهد أنك فوق العرش فوق سبع سماوات، وليس كما يقول أعداؤك الزنادقة.

Muḥammad ibn Muṣʿab al-ʿĀbid [d. 228] said, “Whoever claims that You do not speak and [that] You will not be seen in the Hereafter, then he is a disbeliever in Your Face and does not know You. I bear witness that You are above the Throne and over the seven heavens [*fawq al-ʿarsh fawq sabʿ samāwāt*], contrary to what your enemies—the heretics—say.”³⁷

This narration also shows *Imām al-Dāraquṭnī*’s affirmation of *al-ʿUluww*, and to contend otherwise would simply digress to ad-hoc argumentation.

What indicates that *al-Dāraquṭnī* affirmed the apparent meanings of the *Ṣifāt* is that he had no issue in narrating some *aḥādīth* which the *Ashāʿirah* would likely object to. One

³⁵ Ibid., and it is an authentic narration.

³⁶ *Al-Lālakāʾī*, *Sharḥ Uṣūl Iʿtiqād*, vol. 3, p. 443. Its narrators are reliable.

³⁷ *Al-Dāraquṭnī*, *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, p. 73. *Shaykh al-Albānī* authenticated its *isnād*.

example is *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī narrating a *ḥadīth* affirming a *Kaff* (Palm) for Allāh while proving that Allāh has a *Yamīn* (Right Hand).³⁸ Al-Dāraquṭnī likewise narrated *aḥādīth* on the *hubūṭ* (coming down) of Allāh to prove His *nuzūl* (descent).³⁹ How did he deduce a correlation between *al-hubūṭ* and *al-nuzūl* if their meanings were unknown?

Moreover, *al-Ḥafīẓ* al-Dāraquṭnī narrated the *ḥadīth* which describes Allāh as coming down to the lowest heaven and **remaining as such**⁴⁰ until the break of dawn, **when He ascends to the heaven!**⁴¹ This would strike any *Ash‘arī* as being anthropomorphic, but al-Dāraquṭnī described the wording “then, He ascends” as being a *ziyādah ḥasnah* (good addition)!⁴² He accepted this *ziyādah* despite most *aḥādīth* of *al-nuzūl* excluding it.

Similarly, *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī narrated the disputed *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) saw Allāh in the image of a young man.⁴³ Some of the scholars have accepted this narration while others have renounced it.⁴⁴ Rather than rejecting it, however, *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī cited Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī (d. 264) speaking of this report and its narrators in positive terms!⁴⁵

Furthermore, we find that in his *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, *al-Ḥafīẓ* al-Dāraquṭnī has a section where he reports the *aḥādīth* describing the Throne as creaking with Allah mounting upon it!⁴⁶ Never does al-Dāraquṭnī oppose it nor speak against it, which this indicates he had no objections to its meaning (and perhaps neither to its authenticity).

These occurrences throughout al-Dāraquṭnī creedal works led Ibn Jamā‘ah (d. 728), the *Ash‘arī Qāḍī*, to speak against his narration of these *aḥādīth*, adding that many of the

³⁸ Ibid., 67–68

³⁹ Al-Dāraquṭnī, *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*, ed. al-Faqīhī, pp. 99, 132, 133, 153–154, 167

⁴⁰ Ibn Muḥibb al-Ṣāmit (d. 789) narrated from al-Dāraquṭnī with the following wording: “He comes down to this heaven [...] **and that remains His place [makān]** until each dawn breaks [...] then, He ascends to the heaven.” Ibn Muḥibb, *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, vol. 2, pp. 552–533; “*makān*” is also affirmed in *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*, p. 96.

⁴¹ Al-Dāraquṭnī, *Kitāb al-Nuzūl*, p. 133

⁴² Ibid., Ibn Muḥibb, *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, vol. 2, p. 533

⁴³ Al-Dāraquṭnī, *Kitāb al-Ru‘yah*, p. 358

⁴⁴ Some of those who accepted it, like al-Qāḍī Abū Ya‘lā (d. 458), argued that it should be understood in a non-anthropomorphic way, the same way we understand the *aḥādīth* regarding *al-Yad* and *al-Wajh*. Others, such as *Imām* al-Dārimī (d. 280), rejected this *ḥadīth* altogether in his *Naqḍ ‘alā al-Marīsī*.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Al-Dāraquṭnī, *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, pp. 48–49, 50–51, 52–53

muḥaddithīn were unaware of what to affirm & negate for Allāh.⁴⁷ There are also the famous lines of poetry reported from al-Dāraqūṭnī:

أنشدنا الحافظ أبو المجاج يوسف بن خليل الدمشقي بن خليل الحافظ المفيد من لفظه أنبا
أبو القاسم بن بوش، أنبا أبو العز أحمد بن عبيد الله بن كادش، أنشدنا أبو طالب محمد بن
على الحربي، أنشدنا الإمام أبو الحسن علي بن عمر الدارقطني، رحمه الله قال:

حديث الشفاعة في أحمد	إلى أحمد المصطفى نسنده
فأما حديث بإقعاده على	العرش أيضا فلا نجحده
أمرو الحديث على وجهه	ولا تدخلوا فيه ما يفسده
ولا تنكروا أنه قاعد	ولا تجحدوا أنه يقعه

Imām Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn ‘Umar al-Dāraqūṭnī, may Allāh have mercy on him, said, “The ḥadīth of the intercession by Aḥmad—we narrated it with *isnād* to Aḥmad al-Muṣṭafā [the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him]. As for the ḥadīth regarding him [i.e. the Prophet] being seated upon the Throne, then that as well we do not reject. Pass along [*amirrū*] the ḥadīth upon its apparent, and do not delve into that which corrupts. And do not deny that He [i.e. Allāh] is seated [upon the Throne], and do not reject that He will seat him [i.e. the Prophet] [as well].”⁴⁸

In these lines of poetry, *Imām* al-Dāraqūṭnī affirms *qu‘ūd* (sitting) for Allāh! However, it is notable that the authenticity of this report is disputed; *Shaykh* al-Albānī weakened it on the basis of the weakness of Ibn Kādish (who transmitted this from al-‘Ushārī, from al-Dāraqūṭnī) which ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Anmāṭī had attributed to him.⁴⁹ *Shaykh* ‘Ādil Āl Ḥamadān responded by mentioning that not only were these lines of poetry accepted by Al-Dhahabī, Ibn al-Qayyim, and Sulaymān b. Saḥmān nonetheless, but Abū Ya‘lā also reported this⁵⁰ from his *shaykh*, al-‘Ushārī, who heard it from al-Dāraqūṭnī, thus proving that these lines were reported via other than Ibn Kādish as well.⁵¹ Allāh knows best.

⁴⁷ Badr al-Dīn ibn Jamā‘ah, *Īdāḥ al-Dalīl*, p. 233

⁴⁸ Al-Dashtī, *Ithbāt al-Ḥadd*, ed. Āl Ḥamadān, pp. 261–262

⁴⁹ Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Ḍa‘īfah*, vol. 2, p. 256

⁵⁰ Abū Ya‘lā al-Farrā‘, *Ibtāl al-Ta‘wīlāt*, ed. al-Gharās, p. 532

⁵¹ The first footnote on *Ithbāt al-Ḥadd*, ed. Āl Ḥamadān, p. 262

As for *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī having some *Ash‘arī* students—Abū Dharr in particular—we do not deny this. What caused Abu Dharr al-Harawī to be *Ash‘arī* was what he witnessed of al-Dāraquṭnī’s praise for al-Bāqillānī.⁵² What likely occurred was that al-Dāraquṭnī’s praise of al-Bāqillānī, though unrelated to *‘aqidah*, led al-Harawī to sit with him & be affected by his creed. Notably, Abū Dharr never ascribed this *‘aqidah* to al-Dāraquṭnī.

Nevertheless, it was also the case that many of al-Dāraquṭnī’s students were very firm *Atharīs*. One example is his close student, *al-Shaykh* Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfrāyīnī (d. 406), who heard *al-Sunan*⁵³ from *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī.⁵⁴ Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfrāyīnī was known to be a harsh opponent of Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī,⁵⁵ and Abū Ḥāmid said:

مذهبي ومذهب الشافعي وفقهاء الأمصار أن القرآن كلام الله غير مخلوق ومن قال: مخلوق فهو كافر [...] وكل حرف منه كالباء والتاء كله كلام الله غير مخلوق ومن قال: مخلوق فهو كافر عليه لعائن الله والناس أجمعين.

“My methodology and that of al-Shāfi‘ī [d. 204] and [that of] the jurists across the lands is that the Qur’ān is the Speech of Allāh, not created. And whoever says it is created, then he is a disbeliever [...] and ever letter of it—such as the *bā’* and the *tā’*—all of it this the uncreated Speech of Allāh. Whoever says they are created, then he is a disbeliever upon whom be the curse of Allāh and [the curse of] mankind altogether.”⁵⁶

مذهب الشافعي وسائر الأئمة في القرآن خلاف قول الأشعري، وقولهم هو قول الإمام أحمد.

“The methodology of al-Shāfi‘ī and the rest of the scholars regarding the Qur’ān [being uncreated] opposes [the view] of al-Ash‘arī [d. 324]. Their [i.e. the scholars’] view was the view of *Imām* Aḥmad [d. 241].”⁵⁷

Imām Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfrāyīnī’s ascription of this belief to the scholars and jurists across the lands would very likely include his own *shaykh*, *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī. Because we find Abū Ḥāmid would also often make mention of his opposition to al-Bāqillānī regarding

⁵² Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 37, p. 392

⁵³ It is printed today in 5–6 volumes.

⁵⁴ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 17, p. 194

⁵⁵ Al-Harawī, *Dhamm al-Kalām*, vol. 4, p. 408

⁵⁶ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, vol. 12, p. 306

⁵⁷ ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Mardāwī, *al-Taḥbīr Sharḥ al-Taḥrīr*, vol. 3, p. 1281

the Qurʾān's uncreated nature,⁵⁸ this in turn implies (alongside all the other cumulative evidence) that al-Dāraquṭnī would also disagree with al-Bāqillānī on this issue.

Another student of al-Dāraquṭnī was al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412). He narrated lots from his teacher in his *Suʾālāt*, including the aforementioned statement in which *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī said, “Nothing is more hateful to me than *kalām* [theological rhetoric].”⁵⁹ Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī also has a work dedicated to the censure of ʿilm al-*kalām*,⁶⁰ and Abū Ismāʿīl al-Harawī (d. 481) reported:

سمعت أحمد بن أبي نصر يقول: رأينا محمد بن الحسين السليبي يلعن الكلامية.

“I heard Aḥmad ibn Abī Naṣr say, ‘We found Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī [i.e. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān] cursing the *Kullābiyyah*.’”⁶¹

Al-Sulamī also stated, “I saw Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfrāyīnī, Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Ṣuʿlūkī, Abū Bakr al-Qaffāl, and Abū Maṣṣūr al-Ḥakīm [all] upon rejection of *kalām* and its adherents.”⁶²

Lastly, among *Imām* al-Dāraquṭnī's students was *Imām* al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405), who also narrated many statements from him in his *Suʾālāt*. I find it truly unfortunate how it is often said that he was an *Ashʿarī*, as was claimed by Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 771), although he did not bring any evidence except that *Imām* al-Ḥākim took from *Ashʿarī* scholars such as Abū Bakr al-Ṣibghī (d. 342),⁶³ Abu Bakr Ibn Fūrak (d. 406), and Abū Sahl al-Ṣuʿlūkī (d. 368).⁶⁴ This is not very convincing, however, since not only was al-Ḥakīm's interaction with Ibn Fūrak apparently limited,⁶⁵ but Abū Bakr al-Ṣibghī himself refutes Ibn Fūrak's creed! Al-Ḥākim transmitted from *Imām* al-Ṣibghī that he declared anyone who performs *taʾwīl* of the *nuzūl* (descent) of Allāh to mean His command's descent is a misguided innovator,⁶⁶ whereas these *taʾwīlāt* are precisely what Ibn Fūrak argued for in

⁵⁸ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Darʾ Taʾarūḍ al-ʿAql wa-l-Naql*, 2/96

⁵⁹ *Suʾālāt al-Sulamī*, p. 357, and *Imām* al-Dhahabī authenticated it in *al-Siyar*, vol. 16, p. 457.

⁶⁰ It is titled *Aḥādīth fī Dhamm al-Kalām wa Ahlih*, printed 1418 A.H. (1996 C.E.).

⁶¹ Al-Harawī, *Dhamm al-Kalām*, vol. 4, p. 409. The *Kullābiyyah* were the precursors to the *Ashʿirah*.

⁶² *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 407, and it is authentic.

⁶³ Whether or not al-Ṣibghī was an *Ashʿarī* is disputable.

⁶⁴ Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyyah al-Kubrā*, vol. 4, p. 162

⁶⁵ Al-Dhahabī said (*al-Siyar*, vol. 17, p. 216) that al-Ḥākim transmitted only a single *ḥadīth* from Ibn Fūrak.

⁶⁶ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā*, vol. 6, p. 174

his works!⁶⁷ *Imām al-Ḥakīm's* transmission also includes Abū Bakr al-Ṣibghī describing as *Jahmīs* those who understand *al-istiwa'* above the Throne to mean domination,⁶⁸ while this *ta'wīl* was instead mentioned favourably by Ibn Fūrak.⁶⁹ So either al-Ḥakīm simultaneously held contradictory '*aqā'id*, or he'd simply disagreed with Ibn Fūrak here. We also find that al-Ḥakīm approvingly transmitted Ibn Khuzaymah's affirmation of Allāh's '*Uluww* (Ascendancy),⁷⁰ which denotes that they were in agreement on this issue. *Shaykh al-Islām* ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728) similarly said that al-Ḥakīm agreed with Ibn Khuzaymah that Allāh speaks when He wills.⁷¹ *Imām al-Dhahabī* even suggested that al-Ḥakīm had *Karrāmī* inclinations⁷² based on his commendment of Muḥammad ibn Karrām (d. 255).⁷³ So it is no surprise *Imām* Ibn al-Mibrad al-Ḥanbalī (d. 909) described as a fabrication the inclusion of al-Ḥakīm among the *Ashā'irah*, and he denounced Ibn 'Asākir for doing so.⁷⁴ Rather, *al-Ḥāfiẓ* Ibn Ḥajar confirmed that al-Ḥakīm's approach to the *Ṣiḥāṭ* of Allāh was the same as that of Ibn Qutaybah al-Dīnawarī (d. 276),⁷⁵ and Ibn al-Mibrad has similarly described *Imām* al-Ḥakīm as instead opposing the *Ashā'irah*.⁷⁶ And Abū Bakr al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463) said about al-Dāraquṭnī:

انتهى إليه علم الأثر، والمعرفة بعلل الحديث، وأسماء الرجال، وأحوال الرواة، مع الصدق والأمانة، والثقة والعدالة، وقبول الشهادة، وصحة الاعتقاد، وسلامة المذهب.

“Knowledge of the narrations, the *ḥadīths'* [hidden] defects, the names of the people, and the conditions of narrators ended with him. He was with truthfulness and credibility, trustworthiness and balance, acceptability of testimony, correctness of creed [*al-i'tiqād*], and soundness of *madḥab*.”⁷⁷

⁶⁷ Ibn Fūrak, *Mushkil al-Ḥadīth wa Bayānuh*, pp. 471–472

⁶⁸ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol. 6, p. 174

⁶⁹ Ibn Fūrak, *Mushkil al-Ḥadīth wa Bayānuh*, p. 459

⁷⁰ Al-Ḥakīm, *Ma'rifah 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, pp. 83–84

⁷¹ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Dar' Ta'āruḍ al-'Aql wa-l-Naql*, vol. 2, pp. 9–10

⁷² Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lam al-Nubalā'*, vol. 13, p. 299

⁷³ Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 27, p. 61

⁷⁴ Ibn al-Mibrad, *Jam' al-Juyūsh wa-l-Dasākir*, ed. Dār al-Dhakhā'ir, p. 341

⁷⁵ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 3, p. 359. Ibn Qutaybah was from the students of *Imām* Aḥmad who affirmed the *Ṣiḥāṭ* according to the methodology of *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*, as is seen in his refutation upon the *Jahmiyyah* amongst his other works. For example, in his *Ta'wīl Mukhtalif al-Ḥadīth*, p. 394, Ibn Qutaybah explained the *Āyah* “The Most Merciful *istawā* above the Throne” [20:5] to mean Allāh settled (*istaqarr*) above the Throne, and he also affirmed the *qadr al-mushtarak* when doing so.

⁷⁶ Ibn al-Mibrad, *Jam' al-Juyūsh wa-l-Dasākir*, ed. Dār al-Dhakhā'ir, p. 363

⁷⁷ Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Badhdād*, vol. 13, p. 487

The only other scholar regarding whom he used the words “*ṣiḥḥah al-i’tiqād*” was *al-Amīr al-Qādir bi-Allāh* (d. 422),⁷⁸ the *Atharī* ruler.⁷⁹ This implies that according to *al-Khaṭīb*,⁸⁰ these two were in agreement with respect to creed. *Imām al-Dhahabī* (d. 748) said:

وصح عن الدارقطني أنه قال: ما شيء أبغض إلي من علم الكلام. قلت: لم يدخل الرجل أبدا في علم الكلام ولا الجدل، ولا خاض في ذلك، بل كان سلفيا.

“It is authentic from *al-Dāraquṭnī* that he said, ‘Nothing is more hateful to me than ‘ilm al-kalām.’ I [al-Dhahabī] say: He never entered into ‘ilm al-kalām or disputation, nor did he indulge in it. Rather, he was a *Salafī*.”⁸¹

And *al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Mufasssir Ibn Kathīr* (d. 774) said:

الحافظ الكبير، أستاذ هذه الصناعة، وقبله بمدة وبعده إلى زماننا هذا، سمع الكثير، وجمع وصنف وألف وأجاد وأفاد، وأحسن النظر والتعليل والانتقاد والاعتقاد.

“[*Al-Dāraquṭnī*] was the great *Ḥāfiẓ*, the scholar of this science, [both] for a period before him and [also] after him until this day. He heard abundant [narrations]; he compiled, gathered, authored, examined, and benefitted. He was good in study, [location of] defects, scrutiny, and creed [*i’tiqād*].”⁸²

Here we see two other *Atharī* scholars (*al-Dhahabī* & *Ibn Kathīr*) attributing *al-Dāraquṭnī* to the correct ‘*aqīdah* (which, to them, could be no other than the *Atharī* creed).⁸³

⁷⁸ Ibid., vol. 5, p. 61

⁷⁹ *Al-Qādir bi-Allāh* dispersed a creedal treatise titled “*al-I’tiqād al-Qādirī*,” wherein *al-istiwa’* is explained as *al-istiqrār* (settling) and it is stated that the *ṣifāt* are to be affirmed upon their reality/literal (*ḥaqīqah*), not as metaphorical (*majāz*). *Ibn al-Qayyim*, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-Mursalāh*, ed. al-‘Ilmiyyah, vol. 4, p. 1288; *Ibn Taymiyyah*, *Talbīs al-Jahmiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 182–183; & see: *Al-Dhahabī*, *al-Uluww li-l-‘Alī al-Ghaffār*, p. 239.

⁸⁰ *Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī* also affirmed the *ṣifāt* upon their apparent, as *al-Dhahabī* authentically transmitted in *al-Siyar*, vol. 18, p. 284. This indicates that *al-Khaṭīb*’s describing the *ẓawāhir* as indicating *tashbīh* (*Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī*, *al-Jāmi‘ li-Akhlāq al-Rāwī*, vol. 2, p. 107) was a former opinion of his from which he retracted. That is because *Muḥammad al-Za‘farānī* (the one who reported *al-Khaṭīb*’s affirming the *ẓawāhir*) was amongst *al-Khaṭīb*’s later students and was only around twenty when his teacher died, may Allah have mercy on them both. So this was his final view, and Allāh knows best.

⁸¹ *Al-Dhahabī*, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 16, p. 457

⁸² *Ibn Kathīr*, *al-Bidayah wa-l-Nihāyah*, ed. Dār al-Fikr, vol. 11, p. 317

⁸³ Many have recently claimed that *al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr* was an *Ash‘arī* because he had been teaching at *Dar al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyyah*, where it was required to be *Ash‘arī* in order to teach. [Although this argument has been refuted repeatedly](#), conceding this for the sake of argument would not be a problem here because it would entail that *Ibn Kathīr* **became** *Ash‘arī* **after** authoring *al-Bidayah wa-l-Nihāyah*, [a book in which he](#)

And *Imām* Ibn al-Mibrad al-Ḥanbalī (d. 909) mentioned in his *Jamʿ al-Juyūsh wa-l-Dasākir* when listing out the scholars from *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*:

ومنهم الإمام أبو الحسن الدارقطني، كان مجانباً لهم، وله كلام في ذمهم.

“And from amongst them [i.e. the *Atharī* scholars] was *Imām* Abū al-Ḥasan al-Dāraquṭnī; he was one who turned away from them [i.e. the *Ashāʿirah*], and he had words of disparagement against them.”⁸⁴

Lastly, Muḥammad al-Kawtharī (d. 1371), the *Māturīdī* author, said:

الله سبحانه أعمى بصيرة هذا المتسافه [...] حتى دون في صفات الله سبحانه ما لا يدونه إلا مجس. وقال أيضا عن الدارقطني: وهو الأعمى المسكين بين عور حيث ضل في المعتقد وتابع الهوى في الكلام على الأحاديث واضطرب.

“Allāh, Exalted be He, has blinded the foresight of this negligent one [i.e. al-Dāraquṭnī] [...] such that he wrote down about the *Ṣifāt* of Allāh that which none could write except a *mujassim* [anthropomorphist].”⁸⁵ He also said regarding al-Dāraquṭnī, “He is the blind needy one [*al-aʿmā al-miskīn*] from amongst the one-eyed, for he was misguided in creed and a follower of his desires when speaking about the *aḥādīth* and *al-iḍtirab*.”⁸⁶

By now it should be clear the *ʿaqīdah* of *Shaykh al-Islām* al-Dāraquṭnī, praise be to Allāh.

والحمد لله وحده، وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد، وآله وصحبه وسلم.

[clearly maintains a “Taymite” creed](#). It was in this same book that Ibn Kathīr ascribed al-Dāraquṭnī to the correct *ʿaqīdah*, so my point stands nevertheless.

⁸⁴ Ibn al-Mibrad, *Jamʿ al-Juyūsh wa-l-Dasākir*, ed. Dār al-Dhakhāʾir, p. 361

⁸⁵ Al-Kawtharī, *Taʿnīb al-Khaṭīb*, p. 347

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 325–326